AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace paragraph [0027] with the following amended paragraph:

[0027] The bottom portion 50 of the container 10, as shown in Figs. 2 and 3, includes a panel section having a plurality of conventional vacuum panels 55. The base 25 is provided below the vacuum panels 55. For example, each of the longer and shorter sides 15, 20 of the container 10 includes a vacuum panel 55. The vacuum panels 55 accommodate internal forces tending to collapse the vacuum panel 55 inwardly due to filling of the container 10 with a liquid at an elevated temperature, e.g., pasteurization temperature. After the container 10 is hot-filled and capped, cooling of the liquid tends to collapse the vacuum panels 55. Each vacuum panel 55 may include at least one, e.g., four, lateral stiffening ribs 56 to add rigidity, e.g., to prevent more than a certain amount of deformation of the vacuum panels 55. The vacuum panels 55 on the shorter sides 15 generally accommodate a lesser amount of the internal forces as compared to the vacuum panels on the larger sides 20. Further, the bottom portion 50 of the container 10 is adapted to receive a label 61 (Fig. 3) which is wrapped, e.g., shrink-wrapped, around the vacuum panels 55. For example, the label 61 wraps about the entire perimeter of the container 10. The label 61 is positioned below a transition shoulder 54 between the top and bottom portions 45, 50 of the body portion 40.

Please replace paragraph [0028] with the following amended paragraph:

[0028] A grip portion 65 is provided below shoulder 60. The grip portion 65 is inwardly recessed into the body portion 40. For example, the grip portions 65 on opposite sides of the container 10 are spaced a distance that is less than a width of the top portion of the container. Preferably, each grip portion 65 is recessed a depth D_g which is about 2-10 mm, and more

preferably, about 5 mm into the body portion 40. As a result, the border of each grip portion 65 includes a ledge 66 (Fig. 2) that improves gripability. Preferably, the ledge substantially surrounds the entire grip portion 65, although it is also possible that less than the entire perimeter of the grip portion 65 includes the ledge. For example, the ledge may be limited to just the lateral (left and right) sides or one side of the grip portion 65, where the user grips the container 10. Further, although the grip portion 65 is shown as generally oval shaped, it can take the form of other shapes such as circles, diamonds, rectangles or other geometric shapes.